

U.S. Department
of Transportation

United States
Coast Guard



COAST GUARD NEWS

U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Office
600 Martin Luther King, Jr. Place
Room 360
Louisville, Kentucky 40202-2230

Contact: Lieutenant Junior Grade Steven M. Garcia
Public Affairs Officer
(502) 582-5194 / Fax (502) 582-6825

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(5727/1 01-12)

Date: September 5, 2001

TOYOTA/WEBN FIREWORKS SAFEST YET FOR NEARLY 10,000 BOATERS!

Careful preparation paid high dividends to nearly 10,000 boaters during this year's Toyota/WEBN Fireworks. Viewing festivities from an estimated 2,700 pleasure craft, these boaters enjoyed what the Coast Guard and others are hailing as "the safest Toyota/WEBN Fireworks event ever." A river safety coalition of 13 public safety agencies joined forces to create a detailed safety plan to prevent tragedies such as the loss of two lives on the river at Thunder Over Louisville 2000. The plan mirrored that of the successful Thunder Over Louisville 2001 and included an aggressive public education campaign, precise coordination, and the extensive use of 41 law enforcement and water safety vessels.

Two new river traffic control strategies used this year proved highly effective. These were a "no wake zone" regulation to safeguard 5 miles of the Ohio River and a "moving picket line" to escort boats slowly out of the viewing area after the fireworks. The public education campaign included the distribution of over 3,000 boating safety brochures and a massive media outreach effort.

The safety coalition members included Coast Guard active and reserve personnel from Louisville and Cincinnati; Ohio Department of Natural Resources; Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources; Hamilton and Campbell County Sheriffs; Campbell and Kenton County Water Rescue; Silver Grove, Dayton, and Wilder Fire Departments; Hamilton Boat Club; the Coast Guard Auxiliary; and Navy Reserve.

Other than the occasional disabled boat and one incident where a person believed "missing" was located safely at home, no major incidents occurred. This new plan is believed to have paved the way for safer, more enjoyable marine events on the Ohio River for years to come. -USCG-